

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

December 20, 2011

AMENDMENT TO ITEM #_6_____

ENSURING FOOD SECURITY FOR YOUTH WHO AGE-OUT OF FOSTER CARE

The federally-funded CALFresh benefit, which is approximately \$200.00 per month for a one-person household, is needed by some youth to support their successful transition from foster care to independent living. While I support Supervisor Ridley-Thomas' motion to develop and implement a plan to ensure CALFresh enrollment upon termination of dependency ***for those youth who need it***, a comprehensive approach that accurately and timely assesses our youth's needs, placing a primary focus on employment and self-reliance as a preferable, more enduring alternative to government-funded programs; encouraging our youth to make balanced, informed choices; and supporting them with practical tools to follow through on their decisions, is also needed.

The State Department of Social Services' recently-issued quarterly (July-September 2011) report on "Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging-out of Foster Care" revealed that 7% of Los Angeles County's youth are currently enrolled in the CALFresh program; and that this percentage compares poorly to the CALFresh enrollment rates of the majority of California counties, some of which reached 100%. The report, neither indicates how many of our remaining 93% percent of youth actually need or want the CALFresh benefit; nor does it indicate whether CALFresh enrolled-youth demonstrate better outcomes than those youth receiving alternative program services provided by a number of public and private supportive transitional housing programs that teach nutrition, food purchase, budgeting and cost-comparison as part of an overall self-sufficiency plan. Such program services make available access to a food closet, food gift cards, food banks and weekly dinners as part of a multi-faceted educational approach leading to a productive and self-reliant adulthood.

MOTION

MOLINA _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

KNABE _____

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YAROSLAVSKY _____

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On December 7, 2010, this Board unanimously established **Youth Self-Sufficiency** as a countywide goal. The Self-Sufficiency Committee, under the leadership of the Chief Executive Office Service Integration Branch, successfully launched an historic 56-point child/youth-focused integrated service delivery action plan between 12 County agencies and affiliates addressing housing, education, jobs and social/emotional well-being for system-involved children from birth to age 24. Within 11 short months, 41% of the plan is completed; 55% is on-track for timely completion; and only 4% has fallen behind schedule, due to either a state budget challenge or policy delay. **Facilitating CALFresh applications is one of the 56 actions on-track for timely completion.**

As we continue to promote the goals of self-sufficiency, we must also ensure that no youth transitioning from foster care is homeless or without food.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Officer, Interim Director of the Department of Children and Family Services and the Chief Probation Officer, in consultation with faith-based community partners, County-contracted providers, youth and foundations, to also include as part of the "Foster Youth Food Security Plan:"

1. The development of a comprehensive resource guide of all food banks, food closets and public programs, including but not limited to CALFresh, for provision to all exiting youth, with corresponding literature on how to access these resources, now and in the future.
2. The solicitation of donations of food store gift cards from the community and community foundations for distribution to youth in need; and to communicate the availability of these private resources to eligible youth through handout material, training and the **ILPONLINE.org** website;
3. The enhanced availability of nutritional food information and programs on budgeting, shopping, cost comparison and meal planning to aging-out youth, to be provided through county agencies and private partners; and
4. The development of an outcomes evaluation mechanism by which to measure the long-term impacts of each type of food security assistance resource upon the futures of our aging-out youth.

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MDA:hbb

s/motions/EnsuringFoodSecurityforYouthWhoAgeOutofFosterCare